

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2004
7:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Schiring, Vice-Chair Lynde, Commissioners Bach, Bonincontri, Chelminiak, Maggi, Mathews, Robertson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kathleen Burgess, Kevin O'Neill, Department of Planning and Community Development; Patricia Lambert, Parks & Community Services Department

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Schiring who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. STAFF REPORTS

Kathleen Burgess, Planning Manager, informed the Commission that on March 1 the City Council will conduct a study session on the Bridle Trails community trees proposal. It is possible that the Commission will be asked to work on regulations tied to the proposal.

Ms. Burgess reported that the city has annexed the tax lots properties in south Bellevue.

The annual Council retreat is set to begin on January 29. The custom has been to set the Commission retreat following the Council retreat.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - None

7. STUDY SESSION

2004 Update to the Comprehensive Plan

– Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element

Patricia Lambert, Capital Projects Coordinator, Parks and Community Services Department, explained that as part of updating the Parks Plan an extensive comparison was made with the 1993 plan. An evaluation was made of what has changed between then and 2003. The public was involved through focus groups with ethnic communities, sports fields user groups, neighborhood associations, a telephone survey, and general public meetings and study sessions. The 1993 plan included ten or so major focus issues; during the update those were found to have not changed drastically, so they were reorganized to be a little more contemporary and succinct.

The Parks Plan is supposed to be updated every five years. It includes short-term recommendations, which focus ten years out, and long-range recommendations, which focus out 20 years. There is also a section that includes a funding strategy.

Ms. Lambert said during the update process it was determined that the goals and the policies for the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element are still relevant. It was felt, however, that in a couple of places the wording needed to be updated. The park inventory also needs to be updated to include acquisitions and developments since 1993.

The Commissioners were told that the wording of the acquisitions section was revised to be less generic and more specific. It was concluded that the acquisitions policies do not need to be revised. The language of the community services and programs section was also revised to be more positive and to reflect the demographic changes that have occurred in the city over the past decade. Ms. Lambert said the recommendation is to replace the single citywide map (Figure PA.1) with more and easier-to-read maps for open space, greenways and trails; waterfront access; neighborhood sites; the Downtown area; community parks; and recreation facilities, which includes school recreation fields in which the city has invested.

Commissioner Bach asked why the trail that parallels SR-520 and connects with Marymoor Park is not shown on the map. Ms. Lambert said she would research that issue.

Ms. Lambert explained that there are level of service standards for each of the subareas with respect to mini- and neighborhood parks facilities. She shared with the Commissioners maps indicating which subareas do not currently meet the level of service standard and are not expected to by 2020, and those which meet the standard but in which the facilities are not geographically equally distributed. The Commissioners were also provided with a matrix listing all current parks and open space inventories.

Noting that there are 2,343 acres of parks and open space within the city, Chair Schiring asked what percentage that represents of the entire land area of the city. Ms. Lambert said she could look up the answer and report back.

Ms. Lambert said the proposed Comprehensive Plan changes will be presented to the Park Board on February 10.

With regard to the wording change for the section on community services and programs, Commissioner Lynde referred to the last sentence of the second paragraph and suggested that it should read “In addition, the 2000 Census data for Bellevue showed changed demographics, including a large increase in ethnic diversity, an increased senior population, and smaller household size.”

B. City’s 2000 Census Reports

– Volume II Neighborhood Patterns

Kevin O'Neill, Strategic Planning Manager, said the first volume of the demographic report based on the 2000 Census focused on data covering the city as a whole, how the city changed between 1990 and 2000, and how the city's demographics compare with other jurisdictions and the nation. The second volume is far more detailed and focuses specifically on what has been happening within the city. All of the data from the Census was downloaded by census tract and block level, and that was then overlaid with the city's subareas.

Mr. O'Neill said one of the fundamental things a census uncovers is how population has changed over time. Overall, the population of the city grew by 26 percent between 1990 and 2000. The figure is somewhat misleading, however, given that about half of that growth came about through annexations. The true rate of growth was closer to 13 percent. There was a wide variation within the subareas with regard to where growth occurred; some subareas actually lost population. That could be the result of higher vacancy rates, or the result of household sizes going down. In the Downtown area, the population grew by some 120 percent, one of the fastest growing census tracts in the entire county.

In 2000 the average household size was 2.3 persons, a slight drop from 1990. The largest household sizes tended to be in the neighborhoods south of I-90. Not surprisingly, that area also has higher percentages of families and children. Household size is a significant factor in meeting population targets. As the average household size goes down, it takes more housing units to accommodate the same projected population. About 28 percent of all Bellevue households in 2000 were one-person households. The number of one-person households in Bellevue grew 40 percent between 1990 and 2000.

Children made up about 21 percent of the city's overall population in 2000; the figure in 1990 was about the same. While the percentages of children remained about the same, because the overall population grew there were about 5,000 more children in 2000 than there were in 1990 living in Bellevue.

In 1990 about ten percent of the overall population consisted of seniors. By 2000 that figure had grown to 13.5 percent. Part of the change was the result of people aging in place, and part can be attributed to the construction of senior housing in the city, especially in the Downtown where the percentage of housing inhabited by seniors is over 50 percent.

Mr. O'Neill said in 2000 close to 28 percent of the city's population consisted of racial minorities, including Hispanics. For many subareas the percentage exceeds 35 percent; in the area south of Factoria Mall the figure is greater than 50 percent. The increase in ethnic diversity was driven in large part by the growth in the Asian population which more than doubled between 1990 and 2000. The population of almost every subarea in the city was at least 15 percent Asian in the 2000 Census. Crossroads, Southeast Bellevue and the neighborhoods south of I-90 have Asian populations exceeding 25 percent. Since the 1999 Census, Bellevue experienced a very high growth in the number of foreign-born residents.

The Hispanic-Latino population in Bellevue also more than doubled between 1990 and 2000. More than five percent of all Bellevue residents identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino in 2000; that is the same percentage as for Seattle and King County. The Hispanic and Latino populations were not as geographically dispersed throughout the city as the Asian population was in 2000. Almost 25 percent of Bellevue residents in the 2000 Census were born outside the United States, an increase from about 13.5 percent in 1990. The population of foreign-born residents is pretty well dispersed throughout the city. A growing immigrant and refugee

population brings with it needs with regard to English as a second language instruction. Almost 27 percent of Bellevue residents speak a language at home other than English; for some subareas the percentage is greater than 35 percent. The number of households that are linguistically isolated, meaning that no person in the household over the age of 14 speaks English, also grew by a significant percentage.

The 2000 Census showed Bellevue to be a very highly educated community. The census indicated that 54.5 percent of all Bellevue adults have at least a college education. That compares to 40 percent for King County as a whole, and only 25 percent nationally. In 1990 the figure was 45 percent for all Bellevue adult residents.

Mr. O'Neill explained that when the census is collected, data regarding household income is based on the previous year. For 1999 the per capita income in Bellevue was almost \$37,000. When adjusted for inflation per capita incomes actually fell for some Bellevue subareas between 1990 and 2000. The same was true for household incomes. For the Downtown, however, per capita income increased 42 percent after inflation.

The data with regard to poverty levels is based on the federal standard. For the 2000 Census, the poverty level for a household of four persons was \$17,000 or less. Almost six percent of Bellevue residents in the 2000 Census had incomes below the federal poverty level. That was lower than the county average of 8.5 percent. There were, however, pockets within the city with high levels of poverty. Poverty levels are often affected by the number of seniors living within a population given that a higher percentage of seniors have incomes below the poverty level.

In 2000 about 38 percent of the city's overall labor force population both lived and worked in Bellevue. For neighborhoods close to the main employment centers the figure was closer to 50 percent.

Sixty-one percent of all occupied housing units in Bellevue in 2000 were owner-occupied. For some census tracts nearly all of the units were owner-occupied, while in other areas the figure was closer to 40 percent. Because of the high number of condominium units in the city, about 20 percent of all multifamily units are owner-occupied. About ten percent of single family units in the city were renter-occupied. Citywide, less than half of the residents in 2000 lived in the same residence they lived in in 1995. Nearly 40 percent of the city's housing units were constructed prior to 1970. For some neighborhoods the figure was much closer to 90 percent.

Related to housing is the ability of the population to pay for housing. Mr. O'Neill said the standard threshold is that no more than one-third of household income should go for housing costs. In 2000, about 29 percent of all households in the city paid 30 percent or more of their income for housing. For owner-occupied housing that figure was about 24.5 percent; for renters the figure was nearly 40 percent. Housing prices were shown by the census data to have risen faster than income between 1990 and 2000.

Washington and Oregon were the only two states in the nation that showed a reduction in the number of single-occupant vehicle commuters between 1990 and 2000. In Bellevue, 74 percent of the workforce residents indicated travel by SOV in 2000, down from 77.5 percent in 1990. Mode choice is influenced by a number of factors, including what is happening at the work sites with regard to work hours, transportation demand management policies, and ready carpool options. Typically, about 11 percent of Bellevue residents carpool, and about seven percent ride transit. Between 1990 and 2000 there was a significant rise in the number of persons who work from home. Nearly 17 percent of Downtown residents who are in the workforce walk to work.

Average commute times throughout the county and on the Eastside did not rise very much between 1990 and 2000. The average commute for Bellevue residents in 1990 was 21.4 minutes; for 2000 that number grew to only 21.6 minutes. In 2000 the percentage of Bellevue residents who did not own a car stood at about 5.5 percent. Senior households and households with lower incomes are far more likely not to own a vehicle.

Commissioner Robertson said she has been contacted by some residents of the Somerset community who believe the census numbers for their area are not completely accurate. Mr. O'Neill said it is possible to verify the data. He added that between 2000 when the census was conducted and the current time some additional demographic shifts may have occurred, giving the impression that the information is incorrect.

Mr. O'Neill said the census data is used in a number of ways. For one thing, it is used to determine the Neighborhood Enhancement Program boundaries for purposes of allocating funds.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Burgess briefly reviewed the schedule of upcoming Commission meetings. She noted that the housing tour has been slated for February 21, and the housing open house for March 17.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Schiring introduced and welcomed new Commissioner Tobi Maggi.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schiring adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.